



**Commanding General  
1st Infantry Division and Fort Riley  
580 1st Division Road  
Fort Riley, Kansas 66442**

August 14, 2020

Big Red One Soldiers, Civilians, and Families,

Five years ago, I attended a change of command ceremony here at Fort Riley and heard the Division Commander start his remarks with "...I am a Big Red One Soldier." It was the first time I'd heard those words and the impact of what it meant had a profound effect on me. The ability to be a part of such an extraordinary history and lineage, to wear a patch recognized around the world for its combat prowess, and to stand on a parade field where the legends of our profession have trod, were all thoughts that went through my mind as the commanding general spoke to the crowd.

Today, I am honored to say, ***my name is Sims, and I am a Big Red One Soldier—Brave, Responsible, and On Point for the Nation.***

Making that announcement comes with great responsibility, a responsibility I share with each of you. As members of this revered organization, it is our responsibility to live up to the standards of excellence demonstrated by our predecessors. From Cantigny to Afghanistan, men and women wearing the Big Red One on their shoulder demonstrated combat mastery, mental and physical strength, compassion, and empathy. They were feared by their enemies and loved by their friends. They leaned on each other in difficult times, raised each other up, and carried one another through moments of great peril. They refused to be defeated and learned from their mistakes to become stronger, better, and more capable. They reflected the diversity of our society and, though individuals, they formed teams, which achieved unsurpassed synergy through shared vision, respect for humanity, and devotion to family and friends.

As the commanding general, I expect each of us, myself included, to live up to the standards established by those who came before us. In these extraordinary times to be an American, we must be ready should the Nation call us to action. We will continue to strive for mastery of our profession, to achieve the level of combat excellence the Division has displayed since its inception more than 100 years ago. Throughout, we will ensure each Soldier, Department of the Army Civilian, and Family member in the Fort Riley community displays and receives the dignity and respect expected of those privileged to call the Flint Hills home.

Today, I am proud to wear the Big Red One on my shoulder and call Fort Riley home. Most of all, I am deeply honored to serve with each of you.

***Duty First!!      People Always!      All Else Follows!***

Douglas A. Sims II  
Major General, U.S. Army  
Commanding